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Assessing the Nutrient Intakes of Vulnerable Subgroups

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Abstract

This study is a comprehensive analysis of the nutrient adequacy of segments of the population at risk of inadequate nutrient intake, excessive intake, or dietary imbalances, based on the Continuing Survey of Food Intakes by Individuals conducted in 1994-96 and 1998. The segments include adolescent females, older adults, children and adults at risk of overweight, individuals living in food-insufficient households, low-income individuals, and individuals targeted by and participating in food and nutrition assistance programs. The study adds to a growing literature that uses current, improved knowledge of nutrient requirements and recommended nutrient assessment methods to analyze nutrient intakes. The study indicates generally inadequate intakes of key micronutrients, especially magnesium, calcium, folate, and vitamin E; energy intakes less than recommended energy requirements for adults; and consumption of too much food energy from fat and not enough from carbohydrates; and inadequate intakes of fiber. In addition, diet adequacy deteriorates as individuals get older. Children—especially infants and young children—have diets that are more nutritionally adequate than those of adolescents and adults.



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